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THE BALANCE OF LIFE.

The air was warm, not sultry, and the sun rather brilliant than severe. Myriads of small fleecy clouds gambolled across the sky, and threw their flitting shadows upon the rich and undulating landscape almost peculiar to England; where huts and hamlets, simple church-towers, and solitary half-hidden châteaux, lend a human charm to inanimate existence. The scene was commanded from an eminence at the side of a green lane where I was walking; and that spot had been chosen by some person of good taste for the site of a cottage residence. The house was half-built, and many materials and implements were lying scattered about; but the workmen were absent, it being the hour of dinner, and thus the place had all the solitariness of a ruin without its melancholy.

I sat down upon the higher end of a plank which leant across an unsawn log of timber, preserving the equilibrium by my weight, and lost myself for a few minutes in an agreeable reverie. Presently, however, my meditations and the axis of the plank were disturbed at the same moment: some person had seated himself upon the opposite end, and I found my feet dangling.

'That will not do,' said my unceremonious companion with a light laugh, 'we have spoiled the balance;' and edging himself a little higher up, he restored the level, and we both sat with our feet resting slightly on the ground. He was an old man, with white rather than gray hair, but a smooth cheek, unwrinkled brow, and lightsome eye. Good-humour was the characteristic of his regularly handsome features; but this was not disclosed in the common form of a habitual smile. The light seemed to come from within, and diffuse itself over his countenance without affecting the features. It was not the kind of good-humour you could take liberties with: you could not say to that good-humour, 'Old boy,' you could not think of bringing its end of the plank to the ground by moving suddenly from your seat. This retaliation, I acknowledge, was my first impulse; but a second look made me ashamed of the impertinence. The plank seemed to act as a conductor between the old man and me; and almost immediately I felt his mental smile stealing into my heart and rising to my eyes.

'Has it ever occurred to you,' said he, after having looked at me observantly two or three times—'has it ever occurred to you that this is what we are doing all our lives?'

'I have read,' replied I, 'the "Theory of Compensations," in which the author supposes that in the seemingly hardest lot there is always something to make up the balance. But his arguments do not carry conviction: it seems to me that they are disproved by the facts of every-day life.'

'I have not seen the book,' said the old man; 'but I suspect, from what you tell me, that it reveals at least a glimpse of the truth. What do you know of the facts you talk of? You see one man living in that hut, and another in yonder château, and you suppose happiness to be unequally distributed. But the denizen of the hut would no more be satisfied to sit down at the lordly table of the château, with the eyes of the guests and servants upon him, than he of the château would be content with the humble fare of the hut. The feeling of repulsion is mutual; for the men have been brought up in different trains of circumstances, and have each evils and compensations of their own. But this is nothing. Look at a man in himself, and in his own history, and you will still find the balance. What is the counterpoise of present sickness, poverty, or destitution? Nothing: they are themselves the counterpoise of comparative health, wealth, and prosperity. This world is not intended as a scene of unmixed enjoyment. The good probably predominates over the evil; but there is a certain level, the disturbances of which, upward or downward, and our unceasing aims at its restoration, form the true action of life. If this doctrine were better understood—and to confirm it, we have only to look into our own hearts and memories—our views would not be so confined as they usually are. The evils of fortune would not appear so overwhelming; pity would not mingle with our admiration of the martyr; the millionaire would escape our envy; a repining spirit would be chased from our bosoms; and the mournful cypress would be uprooted from our churchyards.'

'Do you remember,' said I, interposing—for the old man's words came from him in a continued stream—'a very painful story related by Coleridge of a young woman whose life was a scene of continued misery, ending in unspeakable horror? Does not this show that there are at least exceptions to your rule?'

'It shows nothing more than the bad habits of thought in which both writers and readers are trained. If you have the patience to listen, I can relate to you an anecdote which, although it has no pretensions to the melodramatic effect with which Coleridge amused the public, I know of my own knowledge to be true, and which, if rightly considered, will illustrate the subject before us, and—"vindicate the ways of God to man."

I was very thankful for the proffer; for I felt a stronger attraction towards this old man than can be accounted for by his words as I am able to repeat them; and after a brief pause, he began his story as follows:—

'I was once,' said he, 'a young fellow upon town, with little and sometimes no occupation, and like others similarly situated, made acquaintance, as a matter of

course, with some strange companions. One of these, whose christened name was Alfred, was only strange when intimately known. Although with the advantages of a good person and a handsome face, he made no special impression upon strangers. He was not retiring, but merely insipid. He was not only destitute of the talent of society, but he did not know what it was, or what was its use. He was not wrapped up in his own thoughts in such a way as to acquire a reputation for eccentricity, but he paid no attention to the thoughts of others. He was calm, cold, quiet, distant; taking the rubs of fortune without a grimace, and pursuing, silently and patiently, his allotted path even when that led to destitution and despair.

'He was a philosopher,' cried I: 'that is the secret!'

'He did not know what philosophy meant. If he was anything at all, he was an artist—a creator; but our acquaintance had lasted a considerable time before I discovered that it was the pencil he used to express his ideas. He was the son of a poor curate, and had come to London to try to live, and to see pictures. He knew nothing but Greek and Latin, and of these not a great deal. He was ignorant of the mechanical part of painting, and had no means of study. He could not even write a sufficiently respectable hand to have any chance of advancement in the great emporium of trade and commerce. What chance had he of being able either to paint or to live?'

'As a clergyman's son,' said I—for I too have some knowledge, and dearly bought, of life—'his chance would be but small, for he was doubtless brought up, in some sort, as a gentleman; but if he had been the son of a peasant he might have carried parcels, or ground colours, and risen to be lord mayor of London, or president of the Royal Academy.'

'You are wrong: Alfred had no pride at all. He would have carried a parcel cheaper than any porter in town, but he could not solicit the job. He was at one time employed as a junior teacher in a school; but his superior having committed some fault, laid the blame upon him, and he was turned off. At another time he was a sort of under-clerk for several months; but the concern failed. All his efforts, in short, to establish himself permanently were unavailing; but still he continued to live. I cannot tell you how he managed this: we used to do it somehow. The remarkable thing in Alfred was, that he preserved, in the midst of utter destitution, the appearance of a gentleman. In such circumstances young men on the pavé commonly look like the desperadoes they are; but Alfred was always scrupulously clean, and his well-saved coat was without a speck, even when there was not a vestige of shirt to be seen.'

'You interest me in this Alfred. Where did he live in the midst of such dire distress?'

'I cannot tell you where he lived any more than how he lived. He lived somewhere: we all did so. The first time we talked intimately together he might indeed be said to have been ill off; for he had just sustained a robbery.'

'A robbery? He!'

'Yes: one forenoon he had lain down to rest himself in Hyde Park, and the sun beat upon his head, and stupefied him. He fell asleep, and when he awoke, his portfolio was gone. I had never seen him in agitation before, and now this was betrayed only in a faltering of the voice and a catching of the breath. He told me, in answer to my inquiries, that the sketches he had lost were worthless—he had tried in vain to sell them; but then he had lost a piece of card-board with them—his last, poor fellow!—on which he had intended to draw other sketches, from which he hoped better things. I was sorry for the lad: we were all sorry for one another; but we laughed and jibed notwithstanding, as if our comrade's mishaps were rare fun. Alfred's coldness was thawed by this misfortune; and I saw that he had a soul under his bare black coat. He pointed to a tree at a little distance—to the effect of the sunlight on its

branches—to the figure of a sleeping destitute man lying under it, while his little destitute child played on the grass by his side. Was it not hard that he should lose all this? It was a pity, I thought; but he could come again when he was able to procure another card-board. There were always plenty of sleeping destitute figures to be seen in Hyde Park—men, women, and children. They came there to enjoy the warm sun and the soft turf, and were quite undisturbed by the line of magnificent carriages that circled at a distance round them on the drive. Yes, Alfred was a painter—it was only his untaught hands that were bunglers—the divine flame of art burned within him!'

'And this, then, is the poor youth's compensation?' exclaimed I, waxing impatient.

'Only in part. Our acquaintance now ripened to an intimacy, and I at length obtained his confidence. This cold, silent, shy, and most destitute youth had loved and been beloved from his boyhood. The object of his attachment was a young lady whose christened name was Jane, the daughter of a captain in the army, for many years the friend and neighbour of Alfred's father. The love of the two young people ripened with their years; and when, after the captain's death, his widow and daughter removed to London, Alfred was perhaps as much determined by that circumstance in his choice of the scene of his adventures as by his devotion to art. The two youthful friends—for it was years before they talked of love—were born and bred in a condition of equality; but the balance after this migration was woefully overturned. The widow, indeed, was disappointed in the assistance and countenance she had expected from her relations in London; but it is wonderful the small sum that retired and abstemious women can live upon even in the metropolis. Jane and her mother not only lived on their pension, but in their lady-like, however economical dress, and in their neat flat-floor, with its balcony adorned with plants and flowers, they presented an appearance of ease and gentility which almost terrified the poor lad as he sank deeper and deeper into the abyss of poverty. The widow was an ostentatious, and somewhat empty person, who denied herself many solid comforts for the sake of retaining various articles of show on which she had prided herself during her husband's life; but her compensation for everything the heroism of her vanity endured, was the dream that her beautiful Jane would make a splendid marriage. Jane, however, hardly made an acquaintance, far less a lover; and the widow, losing patience with the hermit-city, would after a time have returned to the country but for her absolute want of a surplus shilling.

'I do not know that his love was any compensation for Alfred. He never told even Jane of the excesses of his misery; but sometimes, at every deeper plunge he made into the abyss, she read the fearful secret in his wan cheek and haggard look. The girl's heart was almost broken—but "brokenly loved on." He was all the world to her. As to his position in life, she remembered only their early equality; and the desperate contrivances of his penniless gentility, though they filled her eyes with secret tears as she walked with him in the street, never gave her one qualm of shame. Alfred winced under the searching eye of the mother; he sometimes even kept away from the house for a fortnight at a time; but then some new dream of hope would come, and yielding to the mystical attraction by which he was governed, he would suddenly reappear. On these occasions, when they were alone, and Jane hid her streaming eyes in his bosom, she often felt on her shoulder the burning drops that would have been congealed in his proud eyes had he known that she could be conscious of their fall. And so time passed on, weeks, months, years, till he had reached his twenty-fifth and Jane her twenty-third birthday'—

'So old!' interrupted I. 'Compensation was long of coming!'

'But it came. Alfred's progress in painting was of

course slow; interrupted, as it always had been, by the necessity of taking other employments when he could get them, and often by the want of the necessary implements. He at length, however, acquired as much mechanical knowledge as brought his notions of art into play, and there were moments in which he did fancy that he was at length a painter. But he did not get richer. His expenses increased as he advanced; sometimes he fared worse (if that was possible) than he might dress better; and when the poor, friendless, unknown artist was disappointed in the sale of a laborious work, it came like a sentence of starvation.

'In one of these crises he was suddenly offered by a chance acquaintance—the master of a West Indiaman—a passage to Tobago, in return for certain services with his pen to be rendered during the voyage, and on arrival, the office of book-keeper on a plantation in the island. In his desperation he grasped at the proposal, which he looked upon as a God-send; and even Jane, who knew no more than he that a West Indian book-keeper meant something little better than a negro-driver, was reconciled to the temporary separation by the dreadful necessity of his circumstances. As the time approached for their parting, he dreaded the sight of Jane: he did not go near her for a week previous to the fateful day; but at length the last morning—the last hour—came, and he walked to the house like a criminal to execution.

'The street door was open, and he stepped softly up the stair, hoping to find her alone. But her mother was with her, talking in so loud a tone of expostulation and command, that she neither heard the low tap at the door nor its subsequent opening. Alfred gathered in an instant that their secret was discovered; and the words "beggar" and "outcast," coupled with his name, showed the estimation in which she held her daughter's choice. But when Jane, who was staring wildly in her mother's eyes, obviously unconscious of what she was saying, observed him enter, she uttered a scream so wild, and shrill, and long, as to terrify the hearers; and then, dashing aside her mother's hands, she sprang towards him, clasped her arms round his waist, knotted her fingers together, and throwing back her head, burst into convulsions of hysterical laughter. Alfred was shocked and amazed; but the fit continued so long, that the mother's alarm made every other feeling give way, and she shrieked into her daughter's ear that she would no longer oppose her wishes.

"Then tell him!—tell him!"—cried Jane, gasping, and still shaking with the hysterics—"tell him, for I cannot!"

"Be calm, then, and I will tell him all. Sit down, my poor girl, I intreat you!"

"Stop! I will tell him myself—he must hear it from no other lips. Alfred—we are rich!—we are rich!—we are rich!"—and Jane fell senseless in his arms.

'She was right. One of those exceptional occurrences had taken place which romancers make use of as the regular staple of fortune: a rich relation had died, and she had been pronounced the heiress of £2000 a year.'

"Now comes the adjustment of the fearfully disordered balance!" cried I. "Now come the compensations!"

"True," said the old man; "there was not a happier pair within the bills of mortality. Jane, it is true, was still nervous at times. She seemed to mistrust so sudden and remarkable a change. In the middle of the night she awoke with a start, and was unable for some moments to persuade herself that her lover had not sailed for the West Indies. Even in the street she sometimes caught convulsively by his arm, and looked up with a wild suspicion in his face. But, upon the whole, they were a happy pair. Alfred was wholly undisturbed by the idea that the fortune was on her side; and if it had been suggested to him, he would have treated it with a proud and exulting scorn. She was his, mind and body, and all that pertained to them. He was at this period the good genius of many of his desperate

associates; and I myself am happy to acknowledge that I owe to his generous friendship an assistance which trimmed the balance of life, and eventually led to the competence I now enjoy, and to the construction of the dwelling, on a portion of the materials of which we are sitting. But the time appointed for their union approached rapidly.'

"Ay, come to the wedding!"

"Ay, come to the wedding, since you will have it! The last day of single life arrived, and on the next morning Jane was to be his wife. He bade her farewell that night with tearful joy; he walked home instinctively, knew not how; he prayed devoutly, reverently—yet with a deep gushing tenderness and filial affection—to that Almighty Being who had thus led him through the valley of the shadow of death; and then he stepped lightly into bed, with the glory of heaven on his face, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, in his heart.

"The next morning I went to call him, for I was to bear a part in the ceremony. It was a morning'

"Well, well!"

"He was asleep. He is still sleeping. He was dead!" Here the old man, who had been looking upon the ground before him, as if it was the bed present to his mind's eye, turned full upon me; and his peculiar smile broke over his countenance like a flood of light from within, suffusing his chiselled features with a bright and joyous glow, which brought out his face in the midst of the sunshine as if that had been shade.

"The physician," continued he, "talked of disease of the heart: I only know he was dead."

"It was an awful death," said I, struggling against the old man's smile: "so young—so warm in hope—with such bliss before him! How does your philosophy reconcile this with—with?"

"With the justice and mercy of Providence? You shall hear. The events of this world are linked with each other by an eternal chain, a portion of which you have still to see. A week after his death, when Jane seemed to be fast sinking into the grave, her claims to the property which had been considered her own were all on a sudden disputed, and by one who turned out to be the true heir-at-law."

"What?" said I, almost indignantly, "do you now talk of money? Would not starvation itself have been comparative bliss to that young couple?"

"Be tranquil: there is another link. The blow, unfelt for herself, awoke Jane from her despair, for it seemed to strike upon the image which lived in her mind. She thought of the horrors that Alfred had endured, and she asked herself—though with a bitter pang—whether it was the real love he so well deserved which grieved for his removal? Then came a new excitement. The pictures of the half-famished youth had attracted little attention; but his subsequent story threw around them an adventurous interest, and the fame of the artist seemed to spring from his grave. Many there still be who remember a pale, thin, almost transparent-looking young creature, in widow's weeds, attending the picture sales with pencil in hand. This was Jane; and when a painting of his was put up, she watched the bidding with the breathless interest of a gamete whose all is at stake; and then, counting her winnings, as it were, she turned away and glided from the room with the air of one who goes to deposit them at his banker's. This went on for ten months after Alfred's death; and then Jane died."

"She would have lived!" cried I, choking—"she would have lived if—"

"Be tranquil: she died of a hereditary complaint received from her father; and autopsy having been performed, the surgeons pronounced that no happiness, no art, no circumstances whatever, could have prolonged her life for an instant. Now, do you see? Fancy Alfred a beggar with his beggar wife; fancy him closing her eyes in hunger and despair; fancy him, perhaps, the father of an infant destined to a life of struggles and an

early grave! Which is wiser, which more merciful, God or you? You interrupted me while I was telling you what I saw in the death chamber; and I shall now conclude with that, for the masons are returning to their work.

'The bed, with its white furniture and spotless sheets, looked as if it was dressed for a wedding. The window was half-open, and gave entrance to the breath of flowers and the shrill carol of birds. A flowering plant waved its head, half in, half out, on the morning breeze. The sun, warm and bright as it is to-day, glanced into the chamber, its beams silverying the bed-curtains, chasing each other along the wall, and falling on the young man's face, till his placid beautiful smile kindled into joy. Such are the real details of a scene which appeared to me to be melancholy, nay, shocking at the time. I learnt, ten months afterwards, to feel and understand them. To that chamber my fancy has ever since retired for comfort and delight when I have been disconcerted by the events of mortal existence; and that heavenly smile, which then for the first time entered into this solitary heart, has there abided.'

By the time the old man finished his narrative, the chirp of the chisel was heard upon the stones, and the joyous sounds of labour echoed through the skeleton house. I took my leave of him, promising to return when he was settled in his new abode; and I then walked homewards, plunged in a reverie.

With the withdrawal of his peculiar smile, however, I must say my temporary adhesion to his theory relaxed. I began to reflect that it was founded entirely on assumptions, and that the negative evils avoided were not necessarily attendant on the case. In the well-ordered march of events, special sufferings are continually occurring without any appearance of the old man's compensations, though, I think, not without a good result of a different kind. I believe the presence of what we call evil in the general scheme, as well as what we call good, to be necessary; for otherwise the state of action, which is the condition of our mortal existence, would be incomplete. Without evil there would be no trial, no struggle, no sympathy, no active benevolence, but all would rest satisfied in their solitary bliss. The evil of early death is perhaps the most shocking of all; yet it serves to chasten the spirit, evoke the profoundest sympathies, and relax the hold of men from the things of time; while to the individual removed it may, in certain conditions, be in the eye of the severest reason, as it assuredly is in the eye of faith, great gain. Actions and motives, in fact, are all that are our concern; for results, whether good or evil, are in the hands of the Almighty; and this world being only preparatory to a larger dispensation of being, it is to that we must look for the true Balance. L. R.

THE TYRIAN DYE, AND THE DYEING MOLLUSCA.

As the nymph Tyras was playing with the dog of her lover, Hercules, she perceived that the animal's mouth was stained a beautiful violet colour from the fish of a shell which he had broken on the sea-shore. And so beautiful did it appear to her, that she declared to Hercules he should see her no more until he had procured for her a suit dyed of that colour. Then Hercules, moved by love, collected an immense number of those shells, with which he dyed a robe for the nymph.

Such is the legend (from the name of the nymph so evidently metaphorical) connected with the discovery of the celebrated Tyrian dye, which we have reason to believe was known at a time long antecedent to the supposed era of Hercules. Homer speaks of the colour, and affirms that none but princes and heroes were allowed to wear it—a custom common to most ancient nations. Indeed not only does it appear to have been one of the most distinguishing marks of dignity, but it was especially consecrated to the service of the Deity. Thus Moses used purple linen, &c. for the tabernacle and the dress of the high priest.

The Babylonians and other heathen nations gave robes of purple to their idols. Herodotus mentions purple as worn by the Greeks 559 B.C., although the processes of dyeing cotton and linen were not known to that people until after the expedition of Alexander into India, where they dyed the sails of his vessels of various colours. The colour gradually became known at Rome, and was eagerly sought after, notwithstanding its costliness. 'In my youth,' says Cornelius Nepos, 'a violet purple' was the fashion, and was sold at a hundred denarii the pound. Some time after the Tarentine red purple was in vogue, which was succeeded by the double-dyed red purple of Tyre, which last was not to be procured under a thousand denarii the pound.'

So great, nevertheless, was the consumption, that it gave name to a trade—the dealers in purple being styled Purpurarii. The finding and collecting of the different mollusca yielding the colour also gave employment to a particular class of persons, who were called Conchyliote (shell-fishers), or Conchylioguli (gatherers of shell-fish). Suetonius tells us that Julius Cesar interdicted the use of sedan-chairs, of garments dyed in purple, and of pearls, except to certain persons and ages, and on certain days; and later we find the emperors reserving to themselves the sole right of wearing purple, and decreeing the punishment of death to all who should dare to assume it, even if covered with a robe of another colour. This despotic mandate necessarily greatly diminished the manufacture, though it continued to flourish in the East until the eleventh century. Finally, the art became lost until a Mr Cole of Bristol, towards the end of the seventeenth century, revived it by making experiments, which he has minutely described, with the *Purpura lapillus* on the Welsh coasts. He says—'The shells being harder than most other kinds, are to be broken with a smart stroke with a hammer on a piece of iron or firm piece of timber (with their mouths downwards), so as not to crush the body of the fish within: the broken pieces being picked off, there will appear a white vein lying transversely in a little furrow or cleft, next to the head of the fish, which must be digged out with the stiff point of a horse-hair pencil, being made short and tapering. The letters, figures, or what else shall be made on the linens (and perhaps silk too), will presently appear of a pleasant light-green colour, and if placed in the sun, will change into the following colours—that is, if in winter, about noon; if in the summer, an hour or two after sunrise, and so much before setting; for in the heat of the day in summer the colour will come on so fast, that the succession of colours will scarcely be distinguished. That to the first light-green it will appear of a deep green, and in a few minutes change into a sea-green; after which, in a few minutes more, it will alter into a watchet blue; from that, in a little time more, it will be of a purplish red; after which, lying an hour or two (supposing the sun still shining), it will be of a very deep purple red, beyond which the sun can do no more. But then the last and more beautiful colour, after washing in scalding water and soap, will (the matter being again put into the sun or wind to dry) be of a fair, bright crimson, or near to the prince's colour, which afterwards, notwithstanding there is no use of any stypic to bind the colour, will continue the same, if well ordered, as I have found in handkerchiefs that have been washed more than forty times; only it will be somewhat allayed from what it was after the first washing. While the cloth so writ upon lies in the sun, it will yield a very strong and fetid smell, as if garlic and asafoetida were mixed together.' Since that time, Gage, Plumier, Réaumur, and Du Hamel, have severally made researches concerning the colouring matter of shells, and have succeeded in making a dye, which, however, the knowledge of cochineal, &c. and of cheaper processes, renders of no avail in an economical point of view.

We turn our attention to the different kinds of shell-fish and marine animals which contain colouring matter; and first in importance we must place the Tyrian murex, long suspected to be the *Murex trunculus*,

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and now proved to have been so by Wilde, who gives the following interesting account of his discovery of the dye-pots, while examining the remains of ancient floors and foundations along the southern coast of the former island of Tyre:—‘I found,’ says he, ‘a number of round holes cut in the solid sandstone rock, varying in size from that of an ordinary metal-pot to that of a great boiler. Many of these holes were seven feet six inches in diameter by eight feet deep; others were larger; and some were very small. They were perfectly smooth in the inside, and many of them were shaped exactly like a modern iron pot—broad and flat at the bottom, and narrowing towards the top. Some were found detached, and others in a cluster; when the latter occurred, two or three of the holes were connected by a narrow channel cut in the stone about a foot deep. Many of these reservoirs were filled with a breccia of shells; in other places, where the pots were empty, this breccia lay in heaps in the neighbourhood, as well as along the shore of this part of the peninsula. It instantly struck me, on seeing these apertures, that they were the vats or mortars in which was manufactured the Tyrian dye. I am confirmed in this opinion by the fact, that the species of shell discovered in this breccia corresponds exactly with that described by the old authors, as that from which the colour was extracted, and from which a purple dye can be obtained even at the present day; and it is acknowledged to be such by modern naturalists. Although I broke up large quantities of these masses, in no instance could I find a single unbroken specimen, which I certainly should have found had they been rolled in from the sea, or were they in a fossilised state. It seems to me more than probable that the shells were collected in these mortars, in which they were pounded, for the purpose of extracting from them the juice which the animal contained; and in this opinion I am borne out by Pliny the naturalist, who says that “when the Tyrians light upon any great purples, they take the fish out of the shells to get the blood; but the lesser they press and grind in certain mills, and so gather the rich humour which issuing from them.” These vats may have been also used for steeping the cloth; for dyeing-pots, cut either in the rock, or formed of baked clay sunk in the earth, are still found in many parts of the East, and may be seen in use in some of the by-streets of Alexandria and Cairo, bearing some resemblance to our tanpits. Such places are still used for indigo-dyeing throughout Africa.’ Nor is the existence of a dyeing matter in the murex unknown at this day in Tyre; for we are told that at the celebration of the feast of Sheikh Marshook, whose tomb stands on a rocky height, the children collect these shells (which, at that season of the year, are found in great quantities on the beach, scarcely a foot under water), and with the slimy matter extracted from them, they draw regular stripes of a pale violet colour on white cloths, adding a little soda and lemon juice, which bring out the colours most vividly; and during the festival every child carries one of these variegated banners on the end of a stick.

Pliny gives two classes of shells from which the dye was obtained—the first containing the smaller species, under the name *Buccinum*, from their resemblance to a hunting-horn; the second included those called *Purpura*. The genuine name *Murex* is supposed at that time to have comprehended all the species indifferently. Most of these species are enumerated by Pliny, and appear to have given colours of different shades, from which, by the mixture of the pieces in different proportions, other varieties of colour were produced. The best kinds were found near New Tyre. The coasts of Africa were famous for the purple of Getulia. The Laconian or Tanarian dye was also accounted excellent, and was of a fiery red; and we have seen that Darius had ‘purple of Hermione,’ which is supposed to refer to a bay on the coast of Argolis, near a city of the same name. The quality of the dye was considered to be materially affected by the nature of the locality and the food on which the mollusc fed.

Aristotle observed the habits of the Murex with great minuteness. He tells us that it scents its prey from a

great distance, and is taken by flesh-baits in the same manner as the fisherman now takes the common whelk (*Buccinum*) on our coasts. He likewise says that it pierces other shells with its trunk—an opinion held by naturalists till within a few years ago. Recent researches, however, seem to show that it is by means of their long, rasp-like, ribbon-shaped tongue, edged with siliceous teeth, that they drill the holes through which they suck the juices of the animal, never relaxing their hold until the work of destruction is completed; and thus unconsciously performing their part in the great scheme of nature, by keeping down the multitudes of bivalve and herbivorous molluscs. The murices are found in depths of from five to twenty-five fathoms, on beds of sand, mud, &c. The species are very numerous, and contain some of the most beautiful tropical shells.

The family of *Purpurifera* of Lamarck (*purpura*, purple; *fero*, to bear) has been so named, says Sowerby, ‘because the animals it includes, and particularly the genus *Purpura*, contain the colouring matter from which the ancients procured their dye.’ It includes fifteen genera, among which are the *Cassis* (cameo shell), *Bucinum*, *Doliium*, *Purpura*, *Concholepas*, *Terebra*, *Harpa*, &c. The true *Purpura* are very numerous and variable in form, and inhabit the seas of the temperate and torrid zones, though the greater part are from the coasts of South America. They are all littoral in their habits—some tenanting sandy beds, others rocks and reefs, ranging from the surface to twenty-five fathoms deep. The *Purpura lapillus* (formerly *Buccinum lapillus*) occurs in great quantities in rocky beds on our coasts, as well as those of France; and we have frequently amused ourselves with endeavouring to cheat the animals into the belief that the tide was returning upon them, by dropping a little sea-water over them, when, if the tide really was near them, they would loosen their hold of the rock; but if otherwise, the experiment only made them cling more closely.

Leaving others of the family of *Purpurifera*, we turn to the delicate *Ianthina*, or violet snail-shell. The colour of all the hitherto-discovered species is of a more or less intense violet-purple; the texture of the shell most fragile; and apart from its great beauty, the peculiar floating apparatus possessed by this mollusc has rendered it an object of much attention to naturalists. Dr Reynell Coates, in an interesting paper in the ‘Journal of the Philadelphia Academy,’ tells us that, with a view to confirm the correctness of Cuvier’s opinion as to the absence of any anatomical union between the mollusc and the vesicles, or air-cells, composing its float, he placed some *Ianthinae* in a tumbler of brine; and having removed a portion of the float with a pair of scissors, the animal set to work to repair the mischief in the following manner:—The foot was advanced upon the remaining vesicles, until about two-thirds of that part rose above the surface of the water; it was then expanded to the uttermost, and thrown back upon the sea like a Lymneea when it begins to swim; it was then contracted at the edges, and formed into the shape of a hood, enclosing a globule of air, which was slowly applied to the extremity of the float. There was now a vibratory movement throughout the foot; and when it was again thrown back to renew the process, the globule was found enclosed in its newly-made envelop. From this it results that the membrane enclosing the cells is secreted by the foot, and that there is no attachment between the float and the animal other than that arising from the nice adaptation and adjustment of proximate surfaces. The float varies in different species. Along the under surface of the float a little line of pearly fibres was remarked, to which are attached the eggs of the animal. The *Ianthina* is abundant in warm latitudes, where it may be seen in considerable numbers floating on the surface of the sea in calm weather; but when rough, either by throwing off the vesicles, or by absorbing them in some unknown way, it sinks to the bottom. When touched or alarmed, it emits a deep-blue fluid, which tingles the sea around, and enables it to escape from the sight of enemies.

The *Scalaria clathrus* and *S. diadema*, and probably, therefore, the rest of the Scalariae, secrete a fluid which produces a fine purple dye, but it is destructible by acids; while the scarlet afforded by the *Planorbis cornue* (a shell found in some abundance in sluggish streams and water-ditches in different parts of England) is still more fugitive.

In addition to the testaceous molluscs affording colours, we may mention the *Aplysia* or sea-hare—marine animals living on the shores or on floating sea-weed, of the order Tectibranchiata, in which order the branchiae or lungs are situated on the back, or on the side, and are covered in by a fold of the mantle, this fold usually including a shell more or less developed. It probably derived its name of sea-hare from the form of the superior tentacles, which are flattened and hollowed, like the ears of a quadruped. It was long regarded with feelings of superstitious terror by the ignorant, who considered that to touch, or, in certain cases, even to look at it, was attended with injury. These animals feed on sea-weed, and, when disturbed, discharge, from the edge of the mantle, a fine purplish-red fluid, which stains the water for the space of a foot round. Darwin speaks of a large *Aplysia* on the shore at St Jago, Cape de Verde Islands, which, in addition to this means of defence, had an acrid secretion spread over its body, which caused a sharp stinging sensation, similar to that produced by the *Physalia* or Portuguese man-of-war. The same indefatigable naturalist gives a very amusing account of the cuttle-fish (*Sepia*) on the same coast. He says, 'although common in the pools of water left by the retiring tide, these animals were not easily caught. By means of their long arms and suckers, they could drag their bodies into very narrow crevices; and when thus fixed, it required great force to remove them. At other times they darted, tail first, with the rapidity of an arrow, from one side of the pool to the other, at the same instant discolouring the water with a dark chestnut-brown ink. These animals also escape detection by a very extraordinary chameleon-like power of changing their colour. They appear to vary their tints according to the nature of the ground over which they pass: when in deep water, their general shade was brownish-purple; but when placed on the land or in shallow water, this dark tint turned into one of yellowish-green. The colour, examined more carefully, was of a French gray, with numerous minute spots of bright yellow: the former of these varied in intensity; the latter entirely disappeared and appeared again by turns. These changes were effected in such a manner that clouds, varying in tint between a hyacinth-red and a chestnut-brown, were continually passing over the body. Any part being subjected to a slight shock of galvanism became almost black; a similar effect, but in a less degree, was produced by scratching the skin with a needle. These clouds, or blushes as they may be called, are said to be produced by the alternate expansion and contraction of minute vesicles containing variously-coloured fluids. While looking for marine animals, with my head about two feet above the rocky shore, I was more than once saluted by a jet of water, accompanied by a slight grating noise. I found out that it was this cuttle-fish which, though concealed in a hole, thus often led me to its discovery. That it possesses the power of ejecting water there is no doubt; and it appeared to me that it could certainly take good aim by directing the tube or siphon on the under part of its body.' But it is not pure water alone with which the cuttle-fish favours those who disturb it; and a story is told of an officer collecting shells in a pair of white trousers, who received upon them the whole contents of the ink bag, after the creature had looked fixedly at him, and taken good aim!

It is hardly necessary to remind our readers that the cuttle-fish furnishes the *sepia* of commerce, although all the Cephalopoda, which are unprotected by an external shell, are furnished with a dark fluid, generally stored up in an *ink-bag*, communicating with the funnel through which, in case of alarm, it is ejected: and even in fossil specimens of extinct species the ink has been found to retain its qualities. Dr Buckland has drawings of them

executed in their own ink, and from the perfection and repletion of the ink-bag, he infers the sudden destruction and rapid petrifaction of these creatures. Some of the species are said to be phosphorescent; and some, as the *Octopus vulgaris* (or common cuttle-fish), and the *Eledone moschata*, to give out a musky odour.

TRACINGS OF THE NORTH OF EUROPE.

STOCKHOLM.

Of all the surprises which a traveller is apt to experience in these northern countries, the greatest will probably take place when he opens his eyes upon Stockholm, and finds it so gay and brilliant a city, with so many objects to gratify not merely the senses, but a cultivated taste. One of the ideas in my mind regarding it was the deploration which the biographer of Descartes pours forth in respect of the folly which the philosopher committed in yielding to the invitation of Queen Christina to go and live in it; when of course he might have easily calculated that it was impossible for a man of any refinement to enjoy a tolerable life in so barbarous and inhospitable a climate. I had, indeed, on the other hand, assured myself that southern ideas about northern places are generally tinged with prejudice. Yet, with every preparation, Stockholm did appear to me a much more beautiful and cheerful town than there was any reason to expect.

It is situated at the outlet of a large lake (*Maelet Lake*), the level of which is only three feet above that of the Baltic. Consequently the stream requires but a short run to join an estuary, along which ships of all sizes can approach the city. The central and original portion of the city is situated on an island (the true Stockholm) in the middle of this stream; on a slope to the north extends the finest and most fashionable district; and to the south there is a more abrupt and picturesque rising ground, bearing a district devoted to the mercantile classes. With this variety of ground—so broken up by and interspersed with water, and with other islands bearing each some fort or other picturesque buildings—Stockholm may be said to unite some of the external advantages of Edinburgh with some of those pertaining to Venice, to both of which cities it has accordingly been compared. The palace, a lofty and imposing structure on the highest part of the central island, forms one of the most striking features of the city. The other buildings of a public nature are less numerous and remarkable than the corresponding edifices in other large cities; neither can it be said that there is any district abounding in superb private houses, as is the case with many capitals. Nevertheless the general effect is fine. It has that felicitous character, participated in by Edinburgh and one or two other cities fortunate in their physical geography, of making a fine picture from almost any point of view. Some of its most charming aspects are caught upon the water towards the Diur-gard Park; and one very delightful and comprehensive view of the city is obtained from the leads of the Telegraph-Office, on the ridge in the southern district.

A Stockholm hotel affords only lodging. My first care, therefore, was to learn how I could be supplied with the other necessities of life during my residence in the city. Fortunately Mr Axel Dickson was now in the Hôtel de Commerce, along with the three young gentlemen who had accompanied me from Trondhjem to Gæle. In their company I went forth in the morning, along a narrow dampish street devoid of side pavement—the *Stor Nygatan* (Great New Street)—passed through crowds of people, including women with bare heads and picturesque dresses, and many military-looking men, and soon found myself in an elegant café on the *Nya Norra Bro* (New North Bridge), where I was told very good breakfasts might be had. The arrangements of the place, from the smart girl behind the table to the little stands with newspapers, precisely resembled those of such establishments in Paris. The match-

less rolls and coffee of the French capital seemed also to have been transplanted to this northern latitude. So civilised a meal, after three months of rough life, was most grateful, and I could not but feel surprised on finding that it did not cost quite so much as an English shilling. Meanwhile Quist undertook to live, while in Stockholm, at a moderate daily allowance. Mr Dickson was then so kind as to introduce me at a club-house (*Stor Sällskapsel*), which, he assured me, was the best place in the city for dining, as Delcroix's Café was for breakfast. Thus all was settled at once, and I was free to betake myself to sight-seeing and the delivery of letters of introduction.

The only drawback from the enjoyment of this first cheerful, sunny morning, in a scene so entirely new, and in many respects so striking, was the necessity of parting once more, and finally, with my three young friends, for they had resolved to go by the steamer to-day to Lübeck, on their way home. Accompanying them on board the vessel, I was agreeably surprised to find it fully a match in size and accommodations for the first-class steamers of the British seas, excepting only perhaps those which cross the Atlantic. It had fine airy saloons, and neat little bed-cabins, fitted up for two passengers each. The voyage is performed in about sixty hours, and I afterwards learned that, in the case of my young friends, it was as agreeable as a steam voyage ever is. But for the engagement of my carriage at Göttenburg, and some other reasons pressing me to return thither, I should certainly have taken this route—in which case the short land-journey to Hamburg would have brought me within three days of my home.

The *Stor Sällskapsel* is a place essential to the plan of life of a certain class in Stockholm. Hundreds of official persons and mercantile men of the better sort dine here every day between the hours of two and four (after which, it is said, there is little chance of being well served). It is a handsome suite of rooms on the first floor of a house in the *Stor Nye Gaten*: the first a vestibule for hats and upper coats; the next a reading-room and library; the next, again, an accounting-room for the establishment. Passing through all these, we come to a room where tables are set out and covered with viands, but without any chairs. Here a gentleman who intends dining stops for a few minutes to eat a bit of bread and cheese, or bread and butter with pickled or dried fish, and to drink a glass of corn-brandy—the invariable prelude to dinner in Sweden. He then advances, perhaps with a portion of his lunch still in his hand, into a large saloon full of tables, each of which is laid with covers for six or eight persons. Here he takes a seat, it may be, beside some group of friends already assembled, and proceeds to order dinner from the *carte*. There is an immense variety of articles submitted to his choice, and whatever he wishes is evoked from a back-room, almost with the quickness observed in matters of sleight-of-hand. When I entered with Mr Dickson, I am sure there were not fewer than sixty gentlemen present. Great care being taken to insure the exclusion of undesirable associates, there is much freedom of intercourse among the members; and at many of the tables I observed precisely the same conversational pleasantries and *abandon* as in private society. If I might venture on a censorious remark, I would say that the indulgence in wine is in general rather greater than is desirable. After dinner, the gentlemen adjourn to a billiard-room up stairs, or go back to their counting-houses.

I accompanied a party in a couple of carriages to the *Diur-gard* or Deer-park, a beautiful domain on the borders of the estuary, the favourite resort of pleasure-seekers during the brief summer of the north. It is also accessible by boats from the quays; but we preferred taking carriages for the sake of a drive along the walks. Scarcely any capital in Europe can boast of a similar place of recreation approaching to the *Diur-gard* of Stockholm in natural beauty. It consists of a mixture of rocky hillocks with green lawns, the whole adorned with splendid old wood, chiefly oaks, while the

neighbouring firth and the opposite shores everywhere furnish most delightful prospects. Throughout the greater part of this charming region nature is undisturbed. In other districts there are sea-bathing lodgings, villas, and places of amusement. Near a pleasant little summer palace of King Carl Johan there is a superb porphyry vase, of native manufacture, nine feet high. Having at length dismissed the carriages, we indulged in a saunter among the places of amusement, of which the most conspicuous is a theatre. In this portion of the deer-park a prominent point is occupied by a villa of Italian aspect, which the late eminent Swedish sculptor, Byström, built for himself. Strangers being admitted for a small fee, I took the opportunity of examining the collection of the artist's works which is preserved in his otherwise empty halls. Byström, I may remark, was in marble what our own Etty was on canvas: he delighted in producing nude female figures, wherein the material greatly exceeds the spiritual. His works, deriving from this source a certain attraction, want the feeling which pervades Thorvaldsen's. A colossal recumbent Juno suckling the infant Hercules seemed to me a huge mass of sensualism; nor were the numerous *baigneuses* much better. The execution, however, is entitled to great praise. The artist spent a considerable sum in erecting this villa, which he designed to be a model of elegant domestic accommodation. The rooms are arranged in the manner of an Italian villa, and decorated in the most costly manner. It is melancholy to reflect that he did not live to occupy the house; and that, being thought ill fitted for a northern climate, it seems unlikely to be taken off the hands of his heirs.

Next morning (Sunday, 9th September), Mr Dickson having left Stockholm on the previous evening for Göttenburg, I passed into the hands of an English friend, who proposed taking me to Drottningholm, the palace of the queen of Sweden, situated at the distance of an hour's sail along the Lake Mæler. During this voyage I observed that, while the two shores of the lake were equal in height, and similarly wooded, that on the north side was decidedly the more picturesque. On narrow inspection, this proved to be owing to the glacial action, of which this district, like every other I have seen in Sweden, bears conspicuous traces. As already explained, this action has rendered smooth and sloping the north side of all prominent rocks, while the south side is generally abrupt and rough. The cause evidently is, that the moving ice, coming from the north, has pressed hard on that side of the rocks which it encountered, so as to smooth them thoroughly; while, having passed over, it could exercise little or no force on the south side, which accordingly was left rough. Now this south side, or *Lee Seite*, as the northern geologists call it, is what we see on the north side of the lake; and its roughness gives that shore its picturesque character. On the other hand, the *Stoss Seite*, or side which has been exposed to the glacial action, is that which we see on the south shore, and it accordingly is comparatively tame. It occurred to me that an artist, aware of these scientific observations, would be apt to give a more characteristic delineation of the shores of the Lake Mæler than one who was ignorant of them. He would be watchful of the opposite kinds of effect, and more disposed to enter into the attendant minutiae. It is strange, however, how few landscape painters think of studying physical geography as a science, with a view to preparation for their work. Is it not as essential to them as the study of anatomy is to the sculptor?

The palace of Drottningholm (Queen's Island) is a formal structure of the last century, placed on the border of the lake, with a backing of fine woods, permeated by straight avenues and winding drives. The interior contains a suite of rooms fitted up in modern taste for the use of the present queen, some of them clothed in a green and yellow silk, which was obtained in China by an official who visited that country about the time of the English war, in order to make arrangements for the

advancement of Swedish interests. Another suite of apartments, in the taste of the last century, contains a good collection of pictures, and a library principally composed of French books. There being little that is of striking interest in the palace, the great resort of the people to this place, I apprehend, is chiefly for the enjoyment of the park and the pleasing scenery of the lake. The inhabitants of Stockholm spend the Sunday evening in the same manner as those of Copenhagen. In the morning, I had remarked the theatre bills on the walls, announcing the performances of the evening. There is also a 'Tivoli'—that is, a large garden containing amusements for the multitude, such as a dancing saloon, an orchestra, merry-go-rounds, and cafes—and this is open on the Sunday, as well as other evenings. From what I saw of such places, first and last, I cannot doubt that evils might be shown in connection with them. The question, however, is, would there be less vice if they were suppressed? It is easy to show instances of error taking their rise in the acquaintances which are here formed; but it is not so easy to say how much evil is prevented by there being such places of resort. If, through delicacy as to such dangers, we suppress Tivolis, and only thereby drive people into low public-houses, where a greater demoralisation is produced, though one which does not show so conspicuously, it must be admitted that no advantage is gained, but the reverse.

In our voyage along the Maeler Lake, my attention had been attracted by a peculiar-looking vessel, which lay like a hulk close to the shore. I was told that it had been the subject of a curious experiment, dictated by the singular restrictions on business which exist in Sweden. In this country, it must be remarked, every craft and trade is rendered a monopoly by ancient privileges. A certain mill being established for each district, no other mill can be set up, whatever may be the exorbitancy of the charges. It comes to much the same purpose as a system still lingering in Scotland under the name of *thirlage*. Now, seeing that no competing mill could be set up on land, a busy-brained projector had bethought him of constructing one in a vessel which should fit from place to place along the great extent of inland navigation afforded by the Maeler Lake. Thus, instead of the old arrangement of taking corn to a mill, a mill would be taken to the corn. He believed he should thus compete successfully with the privileged millers, and, while serving himself, benefit the public. I do not remember from what cause this ingenious plan failed, but so it was, that the navigable mill was lying useless beside the shore.

The general condition of industrial life in Sweden forms a curious study to a member of a nation so differently circumstanced as the English. In his own country he has been accustomed all his life to see men striving with each other in fair competition in every channel of exertion. He may have sometimes thought it a painful thing that men should be so merciless in seeking to take the bread out of each other's mouths, and that the weaker must in all cases be content to give way to the stronger. Perhaps he may have even had his dreams as to the cause of the many evils of the humbler classes resting ultimately in a system which dictates that every man shall try to fee the labour he requires as cheaply as possible. In Sweden, on the contrary, there are, to all appearance, no struggles or contendings—men are content with the little duties and gains assigned to them—and the bulk of the people seem gay and happy. But when he looks deeper, he discovers that here, too, there are struggles, for every man is eagerly endeavouring to obtain a license, or a patent, or a place for himself, whatever may come of his neighbours. Young men linger for years in an enervating idleness, while waiting for appointments, instead of plunging hardily into the mêlée, and carving out a fortune for themselves. Under the gay exterior of life in Stockholm there lurks a mass of poverty as great as in the English towns, or greater, insomuch that

cases of starvation are frequently reported as occurring. And vice, he also discovers, is at least as great in amount in Stockholm as in any other capital. Seeing these things, and hearing at the same time of the many troubles experienced from protection—such as smuggling, the tyranny of customhouse rules, the absolute privation of many articles of convenience which are abundant elsewhere, and, above all, the torporifying effect which the system has upon the industry, the enterprise, and the whole mental life of the people—he in a very little time becomes convinced that, if there be evils in the competitive system, they are evils inherent in human nature and human society, and which it is more easy to exaggerate than to diminish by any change of the national economics.

There is at present a great struggle going on in Sweden between the principles of free-trade and monopoly. At the head of the former party is Mr Hierta, editor of the 'Aftonsblad,' the leading newspaper of Stockholm. The king, whose general tendencies are liberal, is understood to be favourable to this party; but of the four legislative chambers, Nobles, Clergy, Merchants, and Peasants, the last alone is cordially on that side. The clergy, although sufficiently independent in position to follow their own inclinations, give hearty aid to the nobles and merchants in preserving the system of monopoly. I was amused to find the people on that side speaking as if there were something diabolical, or, to say the least, morally detestable, at the bottom of the movement for the emancipation of industry. Mr Hierta seems to be regarded as something very little better than a new incarnation of the evil principle, although, on strict inquiry, I could hear of no portion of his character and actions which could be a fair ground of reproach. We have here, in fact, much the same kind of local ethics as that which in Carolina holds up to public execration the wretch who could think of distributing primers among the negroes, or that which in Yorkshire insinuated as a dark charge against a worthy gentleman there, that he was suspected on strong grounds of having once killed a fox. I may remark that the 'Aftonsblad' bears a curious external mark of the dubious freedom of the press in Sweden. By law, any editor once condemned by the government for too great latitude of remark, can no longer be a responsible editor, neither can the same newspaper be any longer published. In his earlier years, Mr Hierta wrote far too liberally for the taste of Carl Johan's government, and the paper was repeatedly suppressed. On every such occasion a new person stood ready to enter upon the nominal editorship, and the paper reappeared duly with a new ordinal number added to its name. It is now strictly entitled 'The Twenty-fifth Aftonsblad.' I am glad, however, to find that it bore the same appellation in 1838, when Mr Laing visited Stockholm; wherefore I conclude that the paper has passed through all its trials, and fallen at length upon happier days. So far, indeed, is King Oscar from viewing Mr Hierta with jealousy, that he is understood to have once remarked, that if Sweden possessed a dozen such men, it would speedily be a much improved country. His majesty referred on this occasion not merely to Mr Hierta's extraordinary exemption from national prejudices, but to the singular skill, energy, and success with which he has prosecuted various branches of manufacture. Not content with the duty of editing an evening paper, not to speak of his public function as a member of the House of Nobles, this gentleman has established a large silk factory, and also a manufactory of stearine candles, in the neighbourhood of Stockholm. I visited these works, and found all the appearances of admirable arrangement, while the residence of the proprietor near by was that of a man of wealth and high social position. It may be worthy of remark that Mr Hierta, though a noble by birth (a rank of very doubtful import in Sweden), has been entirely the architect of his own fortune. I mentally contrasted him, doing such things in a country which presents so narrow a field as

Sweden, with the generality of the English gentlemen of the press, so much more favourably situated, so clamorous for position and importance, but so negligent of the means of attaining it. Mr Hierta, by his well-directed industry and steady application, may be said to have made himself one of that class whom the English democratic novelist or journalist at once publicly rails against for all the alleged corruptions of wealth, and privately courts and flatters for notice to himself. The great infirmity of the literary order, I have always thought, is its childish neglect of common duties and worldly affairs; whence arises the strange anomaly that the great prizes are carried off by men of inferior faculty, while *their* history is seldom anything but a blotted page.

I set apart a morning to visit the two principal old buildings of Stockholm—namely, the Riddarholms Church. The former is the Nobles' House of Convocation, as its name imports, and a place of note in the history of Sweden. It is a handsome old structure, with a statue of Gustavus Vasa standing in the small square in front. In the hall within, the first and second Gustavus, the fiery Charles XII., and the graceful Gustavus III., have all harangued their subjects. The walls are almost wholly covered with metal tablets, containing the names and armorial bearings of the noble families of Sweden, which, it is said, amount to about 2500, although only about 700 are able to attend their duty as senators. There is a curious armchair for the president, covered with Dutch carving, and bearing plates of inlaid ivory, on which are etched a multitude of scriptural subjects. I also felt some interest in a series of portraits of past presidents, one of whom was a man of Scottish extraction, and of an unhappy history. The name he bore was Count Fersen, which, I understand, was a modification of Macpherson, the Highland clan of which his ancestor was an offshoot in the seventeenth century. On the 28th of June 1810, Count Fersen, in his capacity of Grand Marshal, and in all the trappings of office, was passing through the streets of Stockholm in his carriage, in attendance on the funeral of the young Prince Carl of Augustenburg, a scion of royalty in such favour with the people, that, as usual in such cases, his premature death was attributed to poison. The populace stupidly suspected Count Fersen of having wrought the prince's death, and the faction in possession of the government were not unwilling to see him suffer on that account. It will never be heard without astonishment that, at so recent a period, a dignitary of the kingdom, who had never been formally accused or subjected to trial, was attacked in the streets of Stockholm, torn from his carriage, and killed! I was shown from the windows of the Sallskapet a shop into which a friend dragged the unfortunate count for a temporary refuge—whence, however, he was speedily drawn forth by the mob. In the neighbouring square, in front of the Nobles' House, the guards were ranked up, and he appealed to them for protection. Three men and two officers made an effort to save him, but were ordered to desist by the general in command. The unhappy man was then put to death by the mob in the most barbarous manner.

The Riddarholms church—the St George's Chapel or St Denis of Sweden—occupies a piece of prominent ground near the lake. It is an irregular building, containing old and new parts in very various styles; yet the general effect is imposing. It is disused as a church, and now only regarded as a sepulchre of the illustrious dead. Conducted into it by a gentleman-like man, who acts as inspector, and whose fee is three rix-dollars, whether he takes a single person or a party, we find a long empty nave, of somewhat dreary aspect, with figures mounted in full armour planted along the first few recesses on each side. These are designed to represent monarchs of Sweden of the chivalrous times; but the armour attributed to them is, in some instances, monstrously anachronistic. What, I thought, would

Sir Samuel Meyrick have said if he had heard this dignified-looking inspector proclaiming a king of the thirteenth century in a complete suit of plate-armour! There is, however, one suit of armour deserving of the most careful inspection, being an exquisite specimen of the work of Benvenuto Cellini, and said to have been made by him for King John III., on whose figure it is now placed. Having never seen any of the productions of this singular genius before, I was totally unprepared for the extreme beauty of the workmanship, especially the grouping and cutting of the subject on the shield, which was the story of Mutius Scævola. In others of the recesses I found a great collection of military articles connected with the more brilliant events of Swedish history. There were many standards, many weapons, and guns, and, what was more strange, a vast number of musical instruments, taken during the Thirty Years' War. One article, though in the last stage of dilapidation, was startling in its associations—the little drum which the brave Dalecarlians had carried in their insurrection for Gustavus Vasa. A student of military antiquities would find abundance of curious material in the Riddarholms Kyrkan.

I was next conducted to the transepts, underneath which are the royal vaults. In that to the right, or south, a conspicuous place upon the floor is assigned to a heavy modern marble sarcophagus, which, you are told, contains all that could die of the illustrious Gustaf Adolph. In front of it is a flat glazed case, containing the clothes which he wore at his death on the field of Lutzen (November 1632); as also the sheet on which he was laid on that sad occasion. The stains produced by his blood, though much faded, are still abundantly visible on both sheet and shirt. The walls around are thickly clad with trophies of his many brilliant victories, but all of them greatly decayed. It will be remembered by the reader that this is not the first instance of my having seen specimens of the clothes of princes of the seventeenth century in the course of these northern perambulations. I may make the general remark, that the cloth used for the chief vestments, in all the instances which came under my attention, is usually no finer than the kind of cloth of which a coachman's greatcoat would now be made. One is surprised at this, till he recollects that superfine cloth is comparatively a modern invention. English gallants of the age of Gustavus wore, many of them, silk; but where they used cloth, it was of a homely character. Milton, who was a gentleman, at the same time that he was a teacher and a poet, wore a dress of serge. When we think romantically of those old times, we are apt to overlook such things, even if we are not ignorant of them.

The vault underneath this transept is pretty fully occupied with royal coffins in velvet and gold, amongst which I noted those of Gustavus III. and his sister, and a recently-deposited one, containing the remains of Bernadotte. The lesson which the sight of such silenced greatness inspires is a trite one, but I know few calculated to sink deeper into the heart.

As the one transept is devoted to Gustavus Adolphus, so the other is devoted to the mad-cap Charles XII. We see his sarcophagus, surrounded by the trophies of his singular wars, exactly corresponding with the like objects in the opposite recess. Here, too, is a flat glazed case, containing the last clothes of the hero—his bloody shirt, his cocked-hat with the hole made by the bullet, his gloves, whereof one is stained with blood, having apparently been applied to the wound in the vain hope of retaining the ebbing spirit. Underneath lie his huge jack-boots, at sight of which we think of his threat to send one of them to his refractory council, to compel their obedience to his commands. The plain blue coat, which is of a coarseness of texture fully bearing out the above remarks, reminds us exactly of the portraits of the king. His sword hangs locked to the wall behind. There is also shown a Polish standard, which was taken by his own hand. Altogether the sight of these objects is felt to be deeply

interesting, so well does it serve to make real to our minds a history which, though modern and authentically related, we might otherwise regard almost as a dream.

The rooms I occupied in the hotel being turned towards a narrow street, I had before me the windows of other houses constantly open to voluntary or involuntary observation at the distance of only a few yards. Without wishing to gain any knowledge of Swedish domestic life by such means, I could not help each afternoon, as I sat at my own windows after dinner, seeing a little domestic scene in the opposite chamber. A pretty young woman, plainly and modestly dressed, sat sewing at one side of the open window, while a handsome dark-complexioned young man, in an undress, sat on the other side, reading to her from a newspaper, and occasionally stopping to indulge in light chat. Other members of the family, old and young, were constantly going about. I therefore concluded that the gentleman was an inmate of the house, but only the lover or *affiancé* of the lady. Their evident happiness in each other's society unavoidably interested me, and I fell into many speculations regarding them, most of which ended in the style of a novel with a happy marriage. I was destined by and by, however, to learn something more of my opposite neighbours.

One evening, having nothing particular to do, I formed a wish to see the arrangements of a Swedish theatre, and resolved to visit the one in the Diur-gard. The easiest way of reaching this spot is by one of the many ferry-boats conducted by the Dalecarlian women. One of these I found at the quay near the palace. I must here take time to mention that this is a kind of labour which can be practised only in summer, for during winter the ice serves as a communication. As soon as the hard season is at an end, hundreds of women leave their homes in the Highlands (the district of Dalecarlia), and come down to Stockholm to make a little money by acting as ferrymen during the summer. With their peculiar dress, coarse but picturesque, and their heavy shoes, with the heel under the hollow of the foot, they form a remarkable feature of the population seen on the streets. I had now an opportunity of observing these simple children of the mountains more nearly. There were in the boat which I entered four stout, hardy, healthy-looking young creatures, of somewhat hard outline, but ruddy, clean, and cheerful. Of late years, instead of rowing with oars, they have got paddles adapted to their boats, two persons working each paddle, through a contrivance which puts an additional arm upon the handle. The fare for about a quarter of an hour's voyage was two skillings banco, or less than an English penny. Stepping to the theatre, I found it small and neatly arranged, with a company which, as far as I could judge, played their various parts very respectably. The chief female actor was at once pretty and clever, and she played several very diverse parts. Near me, in the pit, sat a family group, which struck me, I cannot tell how, as likely to be interested as relatives of some of the performers. One of the set was a fine-looking woman, apparently a Jewess, a little past the bloom of life, and undoubtedly a wife and the mother of some of the young people around her. I came home, and thought no more of what I had seen until next afternoon, when the young happy-looking couple presented themselves at their open casement, reading and chatting with all their usual gaiety. I now became aware that the lady was the clever prima-donna of the Diur-gard theatre, though I could not but wonder that I had not recognised her on the stage as the heroine of the casement. By and by, it became equally certain that the family-group which I had seen in the pit was the family occupying the house of which the casement formed a part. Here, then, was a little piece of romance unexpectedly hinted to me before I had been four days in Stockholm. It would be curious to follow it out to an end; but I have no wish to do so. Better that this

vision of happy, and, I hope, pure love, should remain with its unique impression on the mind, like the memory of a child which has been snatched in its young beauty and innocence to Heaven, and which consequently remains a beautiful and innocent child for ever.

R. C.

THE FUGITIVE NEGRO BLACKSMITH.

We have had the satisfaction of forming the acquaintance of a veritable negro doctor of divinity—a man of agreeable manners, and pastor of a congregation, yet a perfect Ethiopian in colour. The history of this person—the Rev. James W. C. Pennington—which has been published in the form of a small volume, is so curious, that we propose drawing attention to its contents.

Pennington was born a slave in the state of Maryland, and for the first twenty-one years of his life he was brought up chiefly on the estate of his master, who also owned his mother and several brothers and sisters. While still young, he was taught the craft of a blacksmith, in which occupation he made himself so useful to his proprietor, that his value, when grown up, was at least a thousand dollars. Brought up in total ignorance of letters or of religion, and performing a dull round of mechanical drudgeries, James was left entirely to the rude promptings of nature. There was in him, nevertheless, as in all God's creatures, a spirit which revolted against coarse oppression, and made him sigh for liberty—the unchallenged possession of his own person. The spectacle of his father 'cow-hidèd' for no offence produced a commotion of feeling that almost induced him to fly; and matters were brought to a crisis by a fresh insult. 'I was one day,' says he, 'shoeing a horse in the shop yard. I had been stooping for some time under the weight of the horse, which was large, and was very tired; meanwhile my master had taken his position on a little hill just in front of me, and stood leaning back on his cane, with his hat drawn over his eyes. I put down the horse's foot, and straightened myself up to rest a moment, and, without knowing that he was there, my eye caught his. This threw him into a panic of rage; he would have it that I was watching him. "What are you rolling your white eyes at me for, you lazy rascal?" He came down upon me with his cane, and laid on over my shoulders, arms, and legs, about a dozen severe blows, so that my limbs and flesh were sore for several weeks; and then after several other offensive epithets, he left me. This affair my mother saw from her cottage, which was near: I being one of the oldest sons of my parents, our family was now mortified to the lowest degree. I had always aimed to be trustworthy; and feeling a high degree of mechanical pride, I had aimed to do my work with despatch and skill; my blacksmith's pride and taste was one thing that had reconciled me so long to remain a slave. I sought to distinguish myself in the finer branches of the business by invention and finish; I frequently tried my hand at making guns and pistols, putting blades in penknives, making fancy hammers, hatchets, sword-canes, &c. Besides, I used to assist my father at night in making straw-hats and willow-baskets, by which means we supplied our family with little articles of food, clothing, and luxury, which slaves in the mildest form of the system never get from the master; but after this, I found that my mechanic's pleasure and pride were gone. I thought of nothing but the family disgrace under which we were smarting, and how to get out of it.'

Without counsel or assistance, James determined to abondon, and, if possible, to reach the free soil of Pennsylvania. One Sunday in November, when all was quiet, he stole away into the woods, but so ill provided for flight, that his whole stock of provisions was a morsel of Indian corn bread, about half a pound in weight. Pursuing his way, darkness came on, and his only guide was now the north star, though when or where he should strike Pennsylvania, or find a friend, he knew not. Several days at least would require to be consumed on

the journey. At three o'clock in the morning the strength of the fugitive began to fail, and he felt the chilling effects of the dew. 'At this moment gloom and melancholy again spread through my whole soul. The prospect of utter destitution which threatened me was more than I could bear, and my heart began to melt. What substance is there in a piece of dry Indian bread? what nourishment is there in it to warm the nerves of one already chilled to the heart? Will this afford a sufficient sustenance after the toil of the night? But while these thoughts were agitating my mind the day dawned upon me, in the midst of an open extent of country, where the only shelter I could find, without risking travel by daylight, was a corn shock, but a few hundred yards from the road, and here I must pass my first day out. The day was an unhappy one; my hiding-place was extremely precarious. I had to sit in a squatting position the whole day, without the least chance to rest. But besides this, my scanty pittance did not afford me that nourishment which my hard night's travel needed. Night came again to my relief, and I sallied forth to pursue my journey. By this time not a crumb of my crust remained, and I was hungry, and began to feel the desperation of distress. As I travelled, I felt my strength failing, and my spirits wavered; my mind was in a deep and melancholy dream. It was cloudy; I could not see my star, and had serious misgivings about my course. In this way the night passed away, and just at the dawn of day I found a few sour apples, and took my shelter under the arch of a small bridge that crossed the road. Here I passed the second day in ambush.'

Night again came on, and he once more proceeded on his wearisome journey. Frequently he was overcome with hunger and fatigue, and sat down and slept for a few minutes. At dawn of day he saw a toll-bar, and here he ventured to ask the best way to Philadelphia. This information he received, and set off in the right direction. His taking the open road was fatal. Shortly he was observed by a man who was vigilant in detecting runaway negroes, and by him he was ordered to give an account of himself. After a little parley, James took to his heels, but a hue-and-cry being raised, he was speedily captured. Led to a tavern as a prisoner, his fate appeared to be no longer doubtful. To all questionings James persisted in saying he was a freeman; but he could produce no papers, and his case was desperate. Here takes place what the narrator calls a moral dilemma. In imminent risk of being sent back to slavery and punishment, was he justified in trying to escape by telling a falsehood? We may hope that the recording angel will blot out the unfortunate negro's offence against truth on this occasion. James's fabricated story was ingenious. He had belonged to a slave-trader who had been taken ill and died of small-pox while on his way to Georgia with a lot of slaves. Several of the gang also died of this infectious disease, and no one claiming, or wishing to have anything to do with the survivors, they all dispersed. On hearing this account the assembled bystanders moved off to a respectful distance, and some voted for letting him go. He was, however, detained during the day, and received some food, which was the first meal he had eaten since Sunday. Towards night, being watched only by a boy, he contrived to slip away, and again was lost to pursuit among the woods.

Wandering in darkness, the north star being shrouded with murky clouds, and stumbling through bushes and marshy grounds, the miserable fugitive was totally at a loss as to what course to pursue. 'At a venture,' says he, 'I struck northward in search of the road. After several hours of zig-zag and laborious travel, dragging through briars, thorns, and running vines, I emerged from the wood, and found myself wading marshy ground and over ditches. I can form no correct idea of the distance I travelled, but I came to a road, I should think, about three o'clock in the morning. It so happened that I came out near where there was a fork in

the road of three prongs. Now arose a serious query—which is the right prong for me? I was reminded by the circumstance of a superstitious proverb among the slaves, that "the left-hand turning was unlucky," but as I had never been in the habit of placing faith in this or any similar superstition, I am not aware that it had the least weight upon my mind, as I had the same difficulty with reference to the right-hand turning. After a few moments' parley with myself, I took the central prong of the road, and pushed on with all my speed. It had not cleared off, but a fresh wind had sprung up; it was chilly and searching. This, with my wet clothing, made me very uncomfortable; my nerves began to quiver before the searching wind. The barking of mastiffs, the crowing of fowls, and the distant rattling of market-wagons, warned me that the day was approaching.'

At this juncture he sees a farm establishment with a small, hovel-like barn, and into this he gladly skulked, and buried himself among the straw. Here he lay the whole of Thursday, his only danger being the yelping of a small dog, which had noticed his entrance into the barn. In the course of the afternoon he heard with terror the noise of horsemen, who passed in search of him. They spoke a few words to the farmer, mentioning that the runaway nigger was a blacksmith, and that a reward of two hundred dollars was offered for his recovery. It was now too evident that the country was roused on the subject of his escape. Night came, and he was again on his route; but speed was out of the question. 'All I could do was to keep my legs in motion, and this I continued to do with the utmost difficulty. The latter part of the night I suffered extremely from cold. There came a heavy frost: I expected at every moment to fall on the road and perish. I came to a corn-field covered with heavy shocks of Indian corn that had been cut; I went into this and got an ear, and then crept into one of the shocks—ate as much of it as I could, and thought I would rest a little and start again; but weary nature could not sustain the operation of grinding hard corn for its own nourishment, and I sunk to sleep. When I awoke, the sun was shining around. I started with alarm, but it was too late to think of seeking any other shelter; I therefore nestled myself down, and concealed myself as best I could from the light of day. After recovering a little from my fright, I commenced again eating my whole corn. Grain by grain I worked away at it: when my jaws grew tired, as they often did, I would rest, and then begin afresh. Thus, although I began an early breakfast, I was nearly the whole of the forenoon before I had done. Nothing of importance occurred during the day, until about the middle of the afternoon, when I was thrown into a panic by the appearance of a party of gunners, who passed near me with their dogs. After shooting one or two birds, however, and passing within a few rods of my frail covering, they went on, and left me once more in hope. Friday night came without any other incident worth naming. As I sallied out, I felt evident benefit from the ear of corn I had nibbled away. My strength was considerably renewed: though I was far from being nourished, I felt that my life was at least safe from death by hunger. Thus encouraged, I set out with better speed than I had made since Sunday and Monday night.'

He now believed himself to be near the boundary line of Pennsylvania, and under this impression skipped and sang for joy. The day dawned, and the fugitive continued his course on the public road. What ensued may be told in his own words:—'A little after the sun rose, I came in sight of a toll-gate. For a moment all the events which followed my passing a toll-gate on Wednesday morning came fresh to my recollection, and produced some hesitation; but at all events, said I, I will try again. On arriving at the gate, I found it attended by an elderly woman, whom I afterwards learned was a widow, and an excellent Christian woman. I asked her if I was in Pennsylvania. On

being informed that I was, I asked her if she knew where I could get employment. She said she did not, but advised me to go to W—— W——, a Quaker, who lived about three miles from her, whom I would find to take an interest in me. She gave me directions which way to take. I thanked her, and bade her good-morning, and was very careful to follow her directions. In about half an hour I stood trembling at the door of W—— W——. After knocking, the door opened upon a comfortably-spread table, the sight of which seemed at once to increase my hunger sevenfold. Not daring to enter, I said I had been sent to him in search of employment. "Well," said he, "come in and take thy breakfast, and get warm, and we will talk about it: thou must be cold without any coat." "Come in and take thy breakfast, and get warm!" These words, spoken by a stranger, but with such an air of simple sincerity and fatherly kindness, made an overwhelming impression upon my mind. They made me feel, spite of all my fear and timidity, that I had, in the providence of God, found a friend and a home. He at once gained my confidence, and I felt that I might confide to him a fact which I had as yet confided to no one. From that day to this, whenever I discover the least disposition in my heart to disregard the wretched condition of any poor or distressed persons with whom I meet, I call to mind these words—"Come in and take thy breakfast, and get warm." They invariably remind me of what I was at that time. My condition was as wretched as that of any human being can possibly be, with the exception of the loss of health or reason. I had but four pieces of clothing about my person, having left all the rest in the hands of my captors. I was a starving fugitive, without home or friends; a reward offered for my person in the public papers; pursued by cruel man-hunters, and no claim upon him to whose door I went. Had he turned me away, I must have perished. Nay, he took me in, and gave me of his food, and shared with me his own garments. Such treatment I had never before received at the hands of any white man. We have copied the whole of this passage. Its simple eloquence is the best tribute that can be paid to that spirit of benevolence which so universally distinguishes the Society of Friends.

By W—— W—— (it might be imprudent to give the whole name of this excellent man) the wretched wanderer was, as he tells us, fed, clothed, and employed: not only so, but was instructed in reading, writing, and much useful knowledge. Here, for the first time also, did he learn one word of the truths of religion. 'As my friend poured light into my mind, I saw the darkness: it amazed and grieved me beyond description. Sometimes I sank down under the load, and became discouraged, and dared not hope that I could ever succeed in acquiring knowledge enough to make me happy, or useful to my fellow-beings. My dear friend, W—— W——, however, had a happy tact to inspire me with confidence; and he, perceiving my state of mind, exerted himself, not without success, to encourage me. He cited to me various instances of coloured persons, of whom I had not heard before, and who had distinguished themselves for learning—such as Bannicker, Wheatley, and Francis Williams.'

James resided with the benevolent Quaker for six months, when it became necessary to depart and pursue his fortunes elsewhere. He found employment in Long Island. The subsequent career of the refugee is not narrated in the work before us; but we learn from himself that, by the kindness of friends, he was educated for the Christian ministry, for which his aptitude in learning and his tastes inclined him. In due time he became pastor of a coloured congregation in New York, in connection with the Presbyterian body. To this scene of usefulness he remains attached, and is now on a visit, for a few months only, to Europe. At the late Peace Congress at Paris, it will be recollectcd that he made a respectable appearance; so much so, that the University of Heidelberg, much to its honour, has con-

firmed on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity—the diploma for which distinction has been submitted to our inspection. It is, we believe, the first time that any such honour has been conferred on a member of the much-abused negro race, and will, it is to be hoped, carry its proper weight beyond the Atlantic. Dr Pennington returns to New York in May, and is meanwhile visiting various parts of Great Britain, where he meets with the attention due to his talents and acquirements, and the worthy direction which he has given them.

THE WEST OF SCOTLAND FORTY YEARS AGO.

CONCLUDING ARTICLE.

Our voyage was an unusually long one, and most fortunately so for me. Mrs Drax, the lady under whose protection I was placed, seeing how uncultivated and ignorant I was, recommended a course of reading which opened a new life to me; and having herself lived much in the world, her conversation was in a different way equally interesting and improving to such a novice as myself. These new studies prevented our time from passing tediously, and I was actually sorry when the voyage terminated. My parents received me kindly, but hardly with the warmth I had expected. My mother, still a pretty woman, was much taken up with dress and visiting; and the high command my father held obliged them to be continually, as it were, in society. I received a fair share of attention; and as they took it for granted that, sooner or later, I must make a good marriage, I was left pretty much my own mistress. Great was their surprise and anger at my calmly refusing General Sir Herbert Silchester, a fine-looking man with a fine fortune, and giving as a reason that I was attached to Frederick Howard, a lieutenant with little else than his prospects as an officer in the Company's service. My mother first fainted, then scolded, then passed me without speaking: my father neither stormed nor lectured, it is true, but quietly contrived to have the 140th regiment ordered to a distant district, where a fever soon carried my lover off. I shall not dwell upon a grief I can scarcely bear to think of even at this day; but it threw me back upon the past, and my thoughts turned sadly to the kind hearts at Glenbrechan, where I yearned to find myself once more. There seemed but one way—namely, to marry some one about to return home; so, as soon as I could summon resolution, I accepted the proposals of Colonel Somerton, a man twenty-six years my senior, because I was assured he was to return to England in the following spring. Little did I then know this most excellent man, or I certainly should have hesitated before giving him a wife whose heart was in the grave of another. I did not deceive him, however, but told him my whole history; and as he still declared that he preferred me to others greatly my superiors in every way, we were married. I had, however, been misinformed as to his intentions of returning home. If he had ever entertained such an idea, he changed his plans, and I remained in India until his death, which took place nineteen years afterwards. I had a son, whom I lost when an infant; and my daughters, sent to England, both died at school there of scarlet fever. My father had married a second time; so, desolate and alone, I determined to go home to Glenbrechan.

There the usual changes had occurred. I knew the laird and leddy were both dead, as were also one son and the two eldest daughters. Ninian, in order to pay off debts and encumbrances, had married for money. Three of the girls were wives and mothers, and Beatrice and Belle lived in a cottage in the immediate neighbourhood. Still, Glenbrechan itself stood where it did—I should know every tree, every stone, every hedge again—Ninian and his two sisters at least were there; and to Glenbrechan I would go to spend the summer, for my

cousin had written kindly, and his wife politely, to press my visit. I was sick with impatience, which grew greater the nearer I approached my dear old home, and at last it became almost like insanity; for although I knew everything that had taken place, I had a sort of fancy that I should find all as I had left it, and would myself become the same Fanny Heatherfield I once was. I could not picture to myself Glenbrechan otherwise than as I last saw it. How my heart beat as we passed the village of Drumbrechan! A few mean houses were added, and that was the only alteration I observed; but all the faces were strange that stood staring at the carriage as it drove past, shading their eyes with their hands; the boys shouting, 'Weep behind!' just as they used to do. From a rise in the ground we used to perceive the house, but now a thriving plantation hid it. I gazed—I trembled—I wept, and spoke aloud to myself—'The postilion is passing the gate surely—here it used to be—and nurse's cottage!' But no gate or cottage was there. 'I must have forgotten,' thought I, as a smart girl issued from a castellated lodge to open a high iron gate. 'No! it is—it is Glenbrechan! there is the old walnut-tree, there the lime-walk and beech-grove! Oh what a pity to put a shrubbery close to the house, and a flower-garden full of green arbour! The offices are gone, and a plantation in their place. It is very neat, and very dull, and very quiet; and oh how unlike langsyne! No young men lounging about; no children running hither and thither; not a servant, nor a dog, nor a weed, nor a beggar to be seen! Oh how dreary and deathlike!' The carriage stopped, and for a moment I seemed struck with blindness. A footman with a powdered head stood at the door: a pale, thin, grave, gray man with Ninian's features came out. It was Ninian himself, indeed; and, visibly affected, we embraced.

He led me through the unchanged hall into the old drawing-room, which was as altered as himself. A rather pretty, rather affected, rather silly, but good-natured-looking woman came forward, and said civilly, 'I welcome with pleasure my husband's sister;' while he introduced her as 'my wife,' and two prim-looking girls as 'my daughters.' Charles and Johnnie were sent for, who presented themselves with smooth hair, well-brushed jackets, and placid countenances. I was then shown to my room, my own old room, which contained the same furniture as of yore (except that the curtains were new), and looked out on the same view as formerly. The old trees, where our swing had hung, waved their branches in the summer wind as they used to do; yet even in that view there was a deathlike calm which frightened me. I approached the old looking-glass, and looked at myself. How well did I remember standing there some time after my journey to London was decided on, fastening blush-roses into my hair with some white heather; how glowing and plump were my cheeks; how merrily my young eyes glanced; and how white my teeth looked, while I jested about the wide mouth that allowed them to be seen! Faded and yellow, withered and worn, I stood there gazing at myself: no roses, no lilies, no bright eyes, were reflected by that glass now! My hair was on the turn, and had the dim appearance that advancing age usually gives: but what were these changed to those in my heart—in my mind! All my life, from first going to Mrs Vane Trimmer's, passed before me in one little moment; and I sank down on the old cosy chair, and wept long, loud, and bitterly. Where were the kind faces that then stood beside me? Where my hearty old uncle and his hospitable helmate? Where my own innocent thoughts—my happy, trusting, confiding spirit? Gone—gone! like my husband, my children, my health, and my youth! Gone, never to return! I dismissed my maid; dreamed, read a little, washed my eyes, and then was able to go down stairs. I looked, as I passed, into several well-remembered rooms, all now furnished sumptuously, and differently distributed. The stair had a hollow sound, as my solitary step stumbled from off the thick

carpet on to the stone: there was a fearful echo about it which I never used to observe.

Mrs Heatherfield was elaborately dressed, and talked a great deal, as all vulgar people do, about gentility; and asked a great many questions, as all silly people do, about nabobs and the native nobility. The dinner was well-cooked, but small; the powdered footmen quiet; the young people silent; and I thought of the old feasts and loud laughter that used to fill that old room, and felt as if in a dream. I spoke little, ate less; and as soon as I decently could, escaped from Mrs Heatherfield, under a pretence of fatigue; lay in bed all next day, under pretence of a headache (pretence, did I say, alas, it was too real!); and upon the following got up in some degree composed.

Everything seemed almost as much altered in the country at large as in this particular family. The habits were English; the cookery French: little wine was drank at dinner; less afterwards. I thought at first almost with toleration of the wild customs in this respect of my early time; but on recalling at leisure the animalism I had witnessed, and the anecdotes of still lower animalism I had heard, I was compelled to admit that the change was not all for the worse. Only think of the story (for it has often been told, and I know it to be true) of one of the company at a laird's drinking club dying during the orgy, and the fact having been observed in silence by another because he thought it would be a pity to disturb the hilarity of the meeting!

Mrs Heatherfield was the daughter of an obscure person, who had somehow made an immense fortune. She was naturally weak, although her capacity was quick enough for common school learning; and as she had all sorts of advantages given her, she profited by them so far as to go through the various accomplishments of her day creditably; but she was quite destitute of solid information; her understanding had never been cultivated, and she was totally unfit for the position she filled. In her confined circle, the two greatest people were a Lady Pumpkin and a Lady Dillyflower, and she could not comprehend the contempt with which a Scotch lady, with no title, and nothing very extraordinary as to fortune—a Mrs Carrondell of Towerbrae—treated them. Mrs Carrondell was of a very ancient line herself, and Towerbrae had been in her husband's family 763 years. She accordingly looked down not only upon mercantile and monied people, but on half the British nobility, whom she designated mere mushrooms, springing up under the rank profligacy of Charles II. She had no right feeling, no good-breeding: she cared for no one; and would, as well as could, say anything to anybody.

One evening, at a party where Colonel Heatherfield also was present, Miss Simkin happened to be seated near two Scotch ladies, who were engaged in discussing Mrs Carrondell's pretensions and impertinences. 'Oh but she really and rightly is what she affects to be,' answered Mrs Macalchit to Miss Macdragon; 'but Colonel Heatherfield is, as all Scotland knows, of as good, and a much more ancient family, even than the Towerbraes; and I happen to know for fact, that Lillias Hillrock would most willingly have been Mrs Heatherfield of Glenbrechan if she could.' From that moment Miss Simkin abandoned the idea of captivating Lady Pumpkin's son and heir, and resolved to direct the whole artillery of her charms against Ninian. The state into which the poor old laird's hospitality and carelessness combined had reduced his affairs, rendered money absolutely necessary; and as Miss Simkin was good-humoured, rather pleasing-looking, and perfectly properly brought up, he soon suffered himself to be ensnared. She became—as much, it must be confessed, in order to make head against the dreaded Mrs Carrondell, as for love of the handsome young soldier—Mrs Heatherfield of Glenbrechan; and he, paying off old debts, set himself seriously down as a country gentleman, giving up country sports to plant, drain, and improve his land, and managing all with the utmost prudence and economy.

In all this he was well aided by his wife, who did for him what he never could have done for himself—namely, turned off all the hangers-on, pensioned off the old servants, and sold half the cows, horses, ponies, pigs, and poultry. A lodge was built, and an iron gate put up, with strict orders to keep it locked, and admit no beggars. The house was furnished anew, the garden newly laid out, a shrubbery planted for madam's private and especial use in dirty weather; and gradually Glenbrechan became almost as much changed as its master.

But why should I be cross with what is nothing more than the usual progress of civilisation? There have been Mrs Carrondells, Miss Simkinnes, and Cousin Ninians in all ages, and there will be to the end of time. What annoys me, after all, is the mere change of costume. The coarseness of our manners—and worse than coarseness—is rubbed off; and if there is some coldness on the surface of the new refinement, it may well be endured when we think of all it has superseded. But to me, and to such as I, the days of childhood come back like a recollected romance; and we do not think that if thrown anew into its scenes in our mature life and changed habits, we should feel as awkwardly as if whirled suddenly from our snug sofa into the forest adventures of a damsel-errant of the middle ages.

Still, some things are startling in this new and superfine world. 'The lodge-keeper, ma'am, has applied for your washing,' said my maid a few days after my arrival: 'her prices are what is usual.' Prices of washing at Glenbrechan! In former days all visitors were 'washed for,' and every one's horses taken in; but I had ceased to wonder at anything. Ah, how well I remember the bookin'-washing in May, when all the bed and table-linen of the winter were washed at the Lintie's Burn—a hundred pair of sheets at a time! What a heartsome week it was! The fire crackling for boiling some of the things; the lasses, 'wi' their coats kilted far abune the knee, trampling others in a tub; the snow-white linen bleaching in the sun on the green grass and beech brushwood, smelling so fresh; and the songs, and laughs, and merry jokes of the maids and matrons that assisted, turning their hard work into pleasant play! All is over now. One laundry-maid gets through the weekly linen easily; and there is 'no fuss, or noise, or low hilarity,' said Mrs Heatherfield; 'all is managed in the London style, which of course must be the best.'

The spinning-wheels (which every woman-servant formerly, after her house-work was over, sat down to round the hall-fire, making a cheerful hum) were cut up for firewood, as were porridge-sputtles, cake-rollers, and meal-tubs; the box-beds and check-curtains were given to the poor; and many curious old articles of furniture stowed away in one of the lofts, because the colonel would not have them parted with, and his wife would not have them used; but the old clock and the old bell were still in their accustomed places—and sadly to my ear did their old familiar voices sound. It was as if the dead spoke; and when I stood by the linn where we used to bathe, it seemed but days instead of years since I had stood there before. The noise of its water was unchanged, and recognised like the voice of an old friend unaltered by years. I need not quote Wordsworth's well-known lines—they will suggest themselves to every heart, as they did to mine; and my cheeks 'were wet with childish tears' indeed, as they rose to memory. Beatrice and Belle had little patience for their sister-in-law—she termed their rusticity vulgarity; and they, in their turn, and with better reason, thought her affected finery vulgarity. Each said spiteful things of and to the other, and I had enough to do between them. I must confess that even I started a little when we first met; for their strong northern accent, homely attire, healthy, weather-beaten skins, made coarse by mountain air and cold-bathing, were somewhat different from what my memory painted 'when distance lent enchantment to the view.' They were full of prejudice too; knew nothing whatever

of the world; little of books; and, after a time, I was convinced that we had moved in society too wide apart even to be the companions to each other I once hoped we should prove. Still, old ties and affections are stronger than anything else. When absent from them, I love them as dearly as ever, and always meet with true heartfelt pleasure those who can talk to me of Glenbrechan as it was forty years ago.

LONDON GOSSIP.

January 1850.

COLD weather seems to be as fatal to fluency of rumours as of rivers: it nips up news, and cheats talkers of their topics. Such being the case, you must not be unduly censorious at my being rather dull and prosy. Doubtless you can sympathise with a talker who has nothing to talk about.

Rather an awkward predicament! Shall I tell you, by way of saying something, that the Bank of England no longer admits Christmas-boxes within its walls, and that the Treasury has issued a notification that with 1849 are to cease such gratuities to government officials. So we may hope that ere long this reproof will be removed from the national character; the fact that twenty thousand persons visited the British Museum on 'boxing-day' is an encouraging proof that a good number can employ the holiday wisely. There is a snug little fact to be communicated, which will be anything but unacceptable to lovers of true poetry. Alfred Tennyson is in London, and about to favour the world with a new edition of 'The Princess,' with such amplifications as will rejoice the poet's admirers. It is no unimportant event in these utilitarian days to have ever so small an addition made to the treasures

'That on the stretched forefinger of all time
Sparkle for ever.'

The author of 'Festus,' too, promises yet somewhat; and the departed blacksmith poet, the Corn-law Rhymier, is being perpetuated in a new edition. Then we have another volume of 'Essays' from Emerson; more thoughts for thinkers; while novels are supplied with unabated affluence. But from all one hears in divers quarters concerning novels, this class of works is not so successful as formerly. Some say that readers are more fastidious than they used to be; others, that authors are less careful, too much in a hurry. Writers might take a lesson from painters, who trace, and sketch, and erase, and touch and re-touch over and over again before their thought realises itself on the pictured canvas.

I told you I should be prosy. This, you will say, has nothing to do with metropolitan gossip. True; but it has something to do with filling a letter. But if prose may be taken to signify literature, it is at present a staple topic, and a few words thereupon will serve to put you in possession of sundry particulars of its *talkiana*. Among recent works is a small one by Dr Calvert Holland on 'The Use of the Hair in the Animal Economy,' which, except among a few scientific readers, has attracted less attention than it deserves. It is an attempt to show that the hair has a function of a much higher order of utility than that usually assigned to it as a mere ornament, or covering, or defence against weather. If a covering only, why does it differ in the sexes, and why is it not equally distributed all over the body? Its development and decay, as the author shows, are in harmony with the progress of life and years. All healthy organs, when under nervous over-excitement, 'have a ready means of throwing off any excess of the principle: the stomach, the liver, the intestines, and all mucous surfaces and glands, by increased secretion, and occasionally by the rejection of their contents. . . . These organs, from the offices they exercise, have ample outlets for the often-occurring accumulation and disturbing influence of the vivifying fluid. The nervous organs themselves, whose energies are not wasted in ministering to the demands of organic life, or, in other words, in maintaining mere animal existence,

have equally urgent necessities for a corresponding species of safety-valve, or such means as may enable them to form extensive and vital relations with the great principle pervading the universe. The hair is designed for one or both of these ends.' Such, in brief, is an outline of the doctor's theory: he supports it by several facts in human physiology. The palms of the hand and fingers are hairless, because the nervous energy expends itself in those parts by continual exercise; while in other nervous centres (the axilla, for example), hair is more or less developed, except on the spine, and by its countless points maintains a compensating process, attracting or discharging according to the state of the body and of the atmosphere. Men of intense vital energy, such as Mirabeau, have a profusion of hair, while the soft, the indolent, and phlegmatic, are generally sleek and smooth. The theory is ingenious and interesting, and will doubtless give rise to further researches in the same direction. As yet, most of the facts connected with the phenomena of the hair are in favour of it.

Another physiological work deserving of notice is 'Anatomie Pathologique du Cholera Morbus,' by N. Pirogoff, a Russian surgeon. It is a large thin folio, containing sixteen plates, with descriptive text. The plates for the most part represent the gastro-intestinal mucous membrane, and changes in the substance of the stomach in portions of the natural size, and in accuracy, colouring, and execution, have rarely been excelled by medical drawings. The author considers the digestive tube to be the seat or focus of the disease, and bases his observations on 'conscientious researches' made in all stages of the malady, on patients in the Caucasus, in Moscow, Dorpat, and different hospitals in St Petersburg. The work, indeed, is a highly valuable contribution to medical science, and does much honour to the Imperial Medico-Chirurgical Academy, at whose charge it has been published.

In Paris, M. Cousin, the well-known professor of moral philosophy, has just rendered a service to the cause of ancient learning by bringing out a complete edition of the works of Abelard, comprising all the renowned teacher's philosophy and theology. Such a work is of course valuable only to the learned, but to them it will be of essential assistance in their studies of mediæval literature. Far different is the book 'De la Douleur,' *On Pain*, just published by a M. Saint-Bonnet, in which the writer contends 'that the thing (*chose*) the most useful, the most beautiful, the most desirable, and the most necessary, is pain'—a doctrine which it may safely be averred will be met with opposition and disbelief by the multitude. Besides these, we have again an attempt to prove an 'uninterrupted filiation of art from the Greeks to our own days,' in M. Léon de Laborde's 'Studien on Letters, Arts, and Industry during the Fifteenth Century,' relating more especially to the marvellous development of Flemish art under the Dukes of Burgundy. Such works, it may be said, are not of much practical benefit; but it is curious and interesting to note them as manifestations of human thought. At all events philosophers gossip about them.

The French Academy have just given away their literary prizes: a gold medal, worth 1200 francs, to Max Müller, one of ten competitors for a treatise on 'Comparative Philology of the Indo-European Languages in Relation to the Primitive Civilisation of the Human Race.' The author brings great learning to bear on this subject, and from study of the Vedas, derives new conclusions concerning the degree of civilisation to which the great family of peoples who spoke the languages in question had attained prior to the as yet unknown period when they broke up into distinct nations. Ethnologists will not be unwilling to hear of trustworthy insight into the early history of our species: it is a subject to which more than one diligent worker is devoting himself. On some questions no prizes were obtained: one of these was to examine and specify 'What influence is exerted by progress and the taste for

material wellbeing on the morality of a people.' The unsuccessful aspirants have the opportunity of trying again.

In the section of 'Morale,' a prize of 1500 francs is offered for the best essay, to be sent in by the 30th November 1851, on 'The history of the different systems of moral philosophy taught from ancient times until the establishment of Christianity, and to show the influence of the social circumstances amidst which these systems were formed, on their development, and that which they in their turn exerted on the ancient world.' The inquiry is a promising one, the more so as it is to be treated in a moral, not a metaphysical point of view. Another subject, on precisely similar terms to those above mentioned, is, 'Ought encouragement to be given, either in the way of premiums or any other special advantage, to associations other than societies of mutual assistance which industry may form, whether among workmen, or masters and workmen conjointly?' Competitors are informed in a programme that they 'will have to examine what are the results of associations of this nature already formed, either in manufacturing industry, or in that of public works, with the encouragement or assistance of the state. They will be required to compare protected associations with those freely formed, and which exist independently of all protection. Should the writers consider that these industrial creations have not obtained all the success anticipated for them, they will have to inquire whether this result attaches to the principle itself, to vices of organisation, or to circumstances.' This is one of the great questions of the day, and we can only wish that a philosopher may be found in some part of the world able to solve it. Social economy may worthily occupy the attention of the Academy as well as philology, jurisprudence, and 'the spirit and consequences of the political economy of Colbert,' for which they also offer prizes.

Before quitting this portion of my gossip, I may mention that an instrument has been submitted to the scientific department of the Academy by an inventor, M. Breguet, who calls it 'Automatic compteur de la difference rates of speed and times of stoppage of a railway train.' Station clerks, it seems, are not always to be depended on for exact reports, and this instrument is to record the information without their assistance. It consists of wheelwork, regulated by clock machinery, with a helix, bearing a pencil, which traces a line on a movable slip of paper. The mode of action is thus explained:—'The machine being placed either on a tender or on a car, a line is passed from the pulley round a second pulley fixed to the axis of one of the wheels, and when the train moves, the whole is put in motion, and the pencil, moving vertically, makes a mark on the paper, which moves horizontally. The two operations produce a sinuous curve, the abscissæ of which represent the space travelled over, and the ordinate the time.' You are perhaps aware that the purpose which this instrument is designed to serve has been already attempted in this country by means of electric apparatus, but with what success is as yet uncertain. Two or three other inventions are talked of, which may as well come in here: they are American. One is for sawing double the quantity of oars hitherto obtained out of a plank; another, by a citizen of Utica, produces from cedar, or plane-tree, or any straight-grained wood, 'a commodity to be used as a substitute for curled hair in stuffing cushions.' One would think that the cheapness of cocoa-nut fibre would have kept other preparations out of the market. Another Yankee has contrived a swivel for carriage-steps, by which they may be turned under the vehicle, and so kept away from the dirt thrown up by the wheels. Another announces a night-lantern, with a reservoir of oil, intended to entrap 'moths and night-flying insects.' And yet another, with 'the universal instrument-sharpener,' of which report says that, 'by a compact and ingenious arrangement of machinery, the foot of the operator communicates at the same time, if required, a rotary

motion to a vertical and to a horizontal grinding-stone, and also a vibratory motion to a hone for finishing the edge." Movable rests and bevel-plates are also fitted, with feeders to supply oil or water, and for the cleansing of the stones—the whole occupying not more than a cubic foot of space. These specimens of ingenuity may serve for a time for English wits to sharpen themselves upon; meanwhile, it is only fair to remind you of the machine recently invented on our side of the water, which will fold three thousand newspapers in an hour.

Social reform, in some shape or other, is attempted and talked about everywhere as well as in London. In Vienna a company has been formed to diminish the enormous cost of funerals. In Berlin four People's Libraries, of about five thousand volumes each, have been opened gratuitously. Some Dutch philanthropists have established a loan bank at Haarlem, to furnish advances to the industrious poor; no individual to receive the benefits of the institution who cannot read or write, or who may be a recipient of public charity. The loans not to exceed a hundred florins, which, after ten weeks, are to be repaid by weekly instalments; and to be applied to the special object for which they are borrowed. The benevolent promoters of the scheme do all the work of the institution gratis. Improved dwellings for artisans are being erected in Brussels and Paris; and on the line of railway from Albany to New York, thirty minutes' ride from the latter city, a working-man's town is to be built; rent to be a dollar a week, with the option of purchasing by the payment of a small additional sum. A public library, too, has just been opened in one of the free parks of Manchester, and there are rumours of similar establishments and workmen's halls for London. A new college for the Independent Dissenters is to be built at St John's Wood: it will not be very far away from an educational institute of another sort—the Marylebone baths and wash-houses built in the New Road, with accommodation for eighty-four women to wash clothes at the same time; and while the elements of cleanliness are reduced to practice in this establishment, Dr Guy is giving a course of eight lectures on public health at King's College.

The programme of lectures issued by the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, comprises subjects and names of the highest order—Faraday on electricity of the air; Murchison on the distribution of gold-ore over the globe; the astronomer-royal on the present state and prospects of magnetism; besides several others which promise a series of most acceptable Friday-evening *réunions*, to say nothing of the instruction and education.

I have only just room to say that a report has arrived of the discovery of a large fresh-water lake, three days' journey from the remotest South African missionary station, by a son of Mr Moffat and two hunters. This fact would afford matter for comment did space permit; but it is time to close.

ORIGIN OF THE CABINET.

Few things in our history are more curious than the origin and growth of power now possessed by the cabinet. From an early period the king of England had been assisted by a privy-council, to which the law assigned many important functions and duties. During several centuries this body deliberated on the gravest and most delicate affairs; but by degrees its character changed. It became too large for despatch and secrecy. The rank of privy-councillor was often bestowed as an honorary distinction on persons to whom nothing was confided, and whose opinion was never asked. The sovereign, on the most important occasions, resorted for advice to a small knot of leading ministers. The advantages and disadvantages of this course were early pointed out by Bacon with his usual judgment and sagacity; but it was not till after the Restoration that the inferior council began to attract general notice. During many years old-fashioned politicians continued to regard the cabinet as an unconstitutional and dangerous board. Nevertheless, it constantly became more and more important. It at length drew to itself the chief

executive power, and has now been regarded, during several generations, as an essential part of our polity. Yet, strange to say, it still continues to be altogether unknown to the law. The names of the noblemen and gentlemen who compose it are never officially announced to the public; no record is kept of its meetings and resolutions; nor has its existence ever been recognised by any act of parliament. During some years the word Cabal was popularly used as synonymous with cabinet. But it happened by a whimsical coincidence that, in 1671, the cabinet consisted of five persons, the initial letters of whose names made up the word Cabal—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. These ministers were therefore emphatically called the Cabal; and they soon made that appellation so infamous, that it has never, since their time, been used except as a term of reproach.—*Macaulay's History of England*.

THE BUTTERFLY.

Is this the type, as poets paint, of man's immortal doom,
When into life and light he springs victorious from the tomb?
Alas, poor fly! a fleeting hour is thine, thy struggles vain,
And sinking soon, the child of dust returns to dust again.

Of human weakness rather than the type dost seem to me,
Of thoughts that from the grovelling earth take wing and upwards flee,

But, unsustained by heavenly power, yield to the passing storm,
And from a wing'd and glorious thing descend a sordid worm.

Father! to thee for help I call, to aid my insect flight—
Invite me heavenward by thy love, sustain me by thy might:
But since the taint will still remain that waits on mortal birth,
Hasten, oh Lord, and break the chain that binds me to the earth!

L. R.

HINT TO BUILDERS.

The lamentable conflagration of Buchanan House, the splendid mansion of the Duke of Montrose, on Loch Lomond, is ascribed, we observe, to the circumstance of an oaken-window lintel having been too near one of the flues. The number of burnings of dwelling-houses from causes of this kind is very remarkable; perhaps it would not be going too far to say that half the number of all the fires that take place are traceable to the proximity of beams of wood to flues. Besides the houses actually destroyed, many make wonderful escapes; indeed no one can say at any time that his house is not in progress of ignition. Within the fabric of our walls fire may be working its way silently and unobserved. Lately, in the course of certain repairs on Glenormiston House, Peeblesshire, a beam of timber, charred and half-burnt, was discovered in connection with the kitchen chimney; that it had not, when burning, set fire to the whole edifice, is matter for extreme surprise. We have also heard that, in the course of some late alterations at Core House, in Lanarkshire, the fine modern mansion of Mr Cranston, beams of timber were removed in a state half consumed by fire. It is really too bad that builders should exercise so little care in matters of such very serious concern.

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